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Message Text

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11
ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 NEA-09 ISO-00 IO-10 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-01

INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-02

SS-15 USIA-06 SCCT-01 SIL-01 /076 W
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R 300151Z JAN 75
FM AMEMBASSY CANBERRA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4930
INFO USUN NEW YORK 700
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

C O N F I D E N T I A L CANBERRA 0638

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: AS, PFOR, PINT, IS, XF
SUBJECT: PROPOSED VISIT OF PLO DELEGATION TO AUSTRALIA

REF: CANBERRA 00590

1. SUMMARY: PRIME MINISTER WHITLAM ANNOUNCED ON JAN 29 THAT THE AUSTRALIAN CABINET HAD DECIDED NOT TO ISSUE VISAS TO A FIVE-MAN PLO DELEGATION WHICH PROPOSED TO MAKE A PRIVATE VISIT TO AUSTRALIA IN LATE FEBRUARY. EARLIER ALL SIX STATE PERMIERS OPPOSED THE VISIT. END SUMMARY.

2. IN ANNOUNCING THE CABINET DECISION, PRIME MINISTER WHITLAM SAID: QTE. "A VISIT AT THIS TIME WOULD EXACERBATE DIVISIONS WITHIN THE AUSTRALIAN COMMUNITY." END QTE. HE ALSO CRITICIZED THE CONDUCT OF ACTU AND ALP FEDERAL PRESIDENT, BOB HAWKE, AND ALP FEDERAL EXECUTIVE MEMBER, WILLIAM HARTLEY ON ISSUE OF PLO INVITATION. QTE. " MR. HAWKE AND MR. HARTLEY HAVE BEEN AS RESPONSIBLE AS ANYONE IN AUSTRALIA FOR EXACERBATING DIVISIONS. THEY HAVE BEEN FAR TOO OUTSPOKEN AS INDIVIDUALS ON THIS MATTER." END QTE. HAWKE, WHO IS STRONGLY PRO-ISRAELI OPPOSED THE PROPOSED VISIT WHEREAS HARTELY, AN ALP LEFT WINGER, ORGANIZED IT.

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3. WHEN ASKED IF VISAS MIGHT BE ISSUED TO A SIMILAR

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DELEGATION IN THE FUTURE, WHITLAM REPLIED, QTE. "I WOULD HOPE NATURALLY THAT IN AUSTRALIA AND IN ALL OTHER COUNTIRES TOO, THE EXPRESSION OF CONTROVERSIAL VIEWS PUBLICLY WILL NOT CAUSE DIVISIONS IN THE COMMUNITY. PEOPLE WHO HAVE COMMITTED NO CRIME - AND ARE NOT PLANNING ONE - CAN ENTER ANY COUNTRY THEY MAY WISH." END QTE.

4. CLYDE HOLDING, ALP LEADER IN THE VICTORIAN PARLIAMENT, TOLD EMBOFF JAN. 28 THAT BOTH PRIME MINISTER WHITLAM AND FOREIGN MINISTER WILLESEE OPPOSED THE VISIT AT THIS TIME AND THAT BOTH WISHED THAT THE ISSUE WOULD GO AWAY. HOLDING ALSO SAID THAT THIS CONTROVERSY COULD SERIOUSLY DAMAGE ALP'S STANDING WITHIN AUSTRALIA' SJEWISH COMMUNITY. HOLDING SAID THAT HE AND ANUMBER OF HIS ASSOCIATES BELIEVE THAT ALP FEDERAL EXECUTIVE MEMBER WILLIAM HARTLEY, WHO ORGANIZED THE PLO VISIT, IS QTE. "ON THE ARAB PAYROLL." END QTE.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: POLICIES, VISAS, VISITS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 30 JAN 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: GolinoFR
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975CANBER00638
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750033-1060
From: CANBERRA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t1975018/aaaaagiz.tel
Line Count: 78
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 75 CANBERRA 00590
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: GolinoFR
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 02 JUL 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <02 JUL 2003 by CunninFX>; APPROVED <03 JUL 2003 by GolinoFR>
Review Markings:

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US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
05 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: PROPOSED VISIT OF PLO DELEGATION TO AUSTRALIA
TAGS: PFOR, PINT, AS, IS, XF, PLO, (WHITLAM)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006